

RETURN TO ROOM 361
 29 August 1940
 The first Preparation Committee meeting for a New System held. Admiral SUETSUGU appointed to preside over the meeting.

The KONOE statement, based on the idea of a New System of government so earnestly desired by the whole nation, was made public home and abroad in the name of Prime Minister KONOE, during the first meeting of the Preparation Committee for a New System on the 28th at 2:00 P. M.

On that day, Chairman Prime Minister KONOE and his Cabinet members, 25 civilian representative committeemen, and 7 standing committeemen gathered at the official residence of the Prime Minister. In the large hall on the second floor of the residence, as a meeting place, formality, even in the placing of seats, was carefully avoided, for the sake of a particularly free discussion centered around the Prime Minister, and an atmosphere appropriate to the founding of the National Imperial Rule Assistance System was soon observed.

Those present were as follows:

Government:

Prime Minister KONOE and all Cabinet members, Director of the Legislation Bureau MURASE, Chief Cabinet secretary TOMITA and other officials concerned.

Civilian: 25 committeemen.

GOTO Fumio, Count ARIMA Yoriyasu,
 Baron IGUCHI Iwakasa, HORIKIRI Zenjiro
 OTA Kozo, NAGAI Ryutaro, MAEDA Yonezo,
 OKADA Tadahiko, OGAWA Gotaro,
 KANEMITSU Yasuo, AKITA Kiyoshi
 ASAO Hisashi, HIRAGA Yuruzu, IZAKA Takashi
 HATTA Yoshiaki, SHIRATORI, Toshio
 SUETSUGU Nobutada, HASHIMOTO Kingoro
 NAKANO Seigo, KUZUO Yoshihisa,
 OKAZAKI, Tsutomu, FURUNO, Inosuke
 TAKAISHI, Shingoro, SEIRIKI Matsutaro
 OGATA Taketora, (Viscount OKOCHI
 (Masatoshi was absent on his journey)
 and Secretary GOTO Ryunosuke.

At 2:00 p. m. the appointed hour, the meeting was opened. At the opening, Chairman Prime Minister KONOE, putting his speech draft on the table, delivered his historic statement as his opening address. In it, the Prime Minister spoke emphatically on the urgent task of establishing an Imperial

Rule Assistance System based on a foundation of firm national organization in order to overcome present difficulties and asked the Preparation Committee for their full cooperation in its implementation.

Next, for the purpose of expediting the proceedings, the Prime Minister appointed Admiral SUETSUGU to preside over the meeting for that day. On Admiral SUETSUGU's taking the chair, discussion began. Many lively questions were shot from the Preparation Committee to which explanations were made by Prime Minister KONOE and Cabinet Chief Secretary TOMOTA, the Standing Secretary of the Committee. Thus in the first meeting, there was an earnest discussion concentrated on making clear the ideas for the New System advanced in the statement.